

VOL IV

1973-~~7~~

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5 April 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, NIS Division

FROM : Chief, Country Profile Staff

SUBJECT : [REDACTED] "Fresh Approach" Memo of 2 April 1973  
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There seem to me to be three positive notes sounded by [REDACTED] memo (perhaps inadvertently):

- 1) His reference to a possible role for the IC mechanism hits at a key problem of the NIS--the lack of a central authority with the clout to make contributors meet deadlines (at least in the sense of preventing problems like that caused by OER on East Germany). That could go a long way toward making the NIS less "ponderous and time consuming."
- 2) His reference to the need to avoid duplication and, in that connection, the idea of doing away with the OCI Country Handbook.
- 3) His argument--toward the end of his final paragraph--in favor of programmed production of basic intelligence, wherein he stresses the need to publish analysts' work on a regularly scheduled basis. This does get at a very real problem confronting the DDI production offices in the light of the cutbacks the DCI has called for in other types of basic intelligence production (notably IMs and IRs).

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[REDACTED] arguments apply better to the existing NIS concept--that is, they seem to support it--than whatever it is he envisions in its stead. It is not at all clear what kind of user his "fresh approach" addresses. The vague "general consumer" he depicts as the sole target of his new concept bears little resemblance to the bulk of NIS users as identified by the extensive survey made in 1969. Indeed, what [REDACTED] proposes seems to be getting farther away from the evidence we have of user needs.

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The recommendations [REDACTED] makes must be judged in the light of the highly dubious premises on which he bases them, i.e., that the community concept of the NIS has been based on the assumption that the components of the intelligence community had neither the knowledge nor the sophistication to produce basic intelligence individually. Presuming that they now do, he contends that they can produce it individually in a way that would be less costly and more responsive to user needs.

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He does not make a convincing case as to why or how. In fact, the thing that really seems to be at the heart of his concern, and which he merely talks around, is the matter of interagency coordination. He evidently considers this the culprit that requires too much time and money. He is not persuasive in his opposition to the community concept, and makes a very one-sided and unbalanced presentation by ignoring entirely the reasons for a community program and the benefits derived from it.

Finally, as for the Country Profile in particular, I am highly dubious--and believe Schlesinger and the Nixon Administration would be--about assigning to a profile writer the responsibility of defining U.S. national interests. Once defined for us in connection with a given country we can, of course, relate the profile to them.